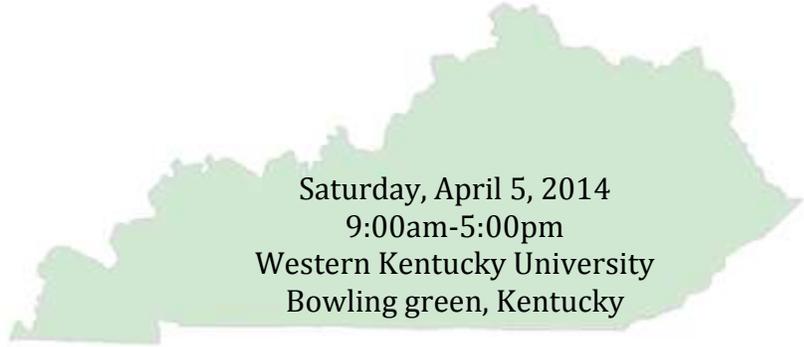


Kentucky Philosophical Association
 SPRING 2014 Meeting



Saturday, April 5, 2014
 9:00am-5:00pm
 Western Kentucky University
 Bowling green, Kentucky

8:30-9:00	Registration Faculty House	
	Room 1 Cherry Hall	Room 2 Cherry Hall
9:00-9:55	“Are Character Intellectual Virtues ‘Reliabilist Virtues?’” Marlin R. Sommers University of Tennessee at Knoxville	“Passive and Active Ignorance” Kate Johnson Bellarmine University
	Commenter: Ian Schnee Western Kentucky University	Commenter: Eva Cadavid Centre College
10:00-10:55	“Theism, Truthmaking, and Presentism” Allen Gehring Brescia University	“A New Analysis of Mercy” Kristofer Rhodes Martin University
	Commenter: Rickey Ray Northeast State Community College	Commenter: Jennifer L. Hudgens University of Kentucky
11:00-11:55	“Why Patience Is Always a Virtue” Matthew Pianalto Eastern Kentucky University	“Overcoming Student Aversion to Obligations” Court Lewis Owensboro Community and Technical College
	Commenter: Bob Sandmeyer University of Kentucky	Student Panelists: TBD Western Kentucky University
12:00-1:00	Lunch—suggestions listed in registration packet	
1:00-2:00	Business Meeting: all are welcome Faculty House	
2:00-2:50	Emily Sullivan Western Kentucky University Winner of the 2014 Student Essay Contest Faculty House	
3:00-5:00	Keynote Address: “Are We Responsible? The Neuroscience of Violence” Valerie Hardcastle University of Cincinnati Faculty House	

Paper Abstracts

“Theism, Truthmaking, and Presentism”

Allen Gehring, Brescia University

Abstract: Philosophers have formulated different theses clarifying the relation of truth and being. After articulating these theses, philosophers use them to rule out metaphysical positions. One example occurs with presentism. In this essay, I argue that theism provides presentists with a way to explain how the past tensed truths they posit are consistent with Truth Supervenes on Being. Part of my case hinges on developing an important but overlooked epistemological intuition that undergirds this thesis.

“Are We Responsible? The Neuroscience of Violence”

Valerie Hardcastle, University of Cincinnati

It could be that traits associated with violence and violent offenders—impulsivity, aggression, externalizing behaviors, failure to learn from experience, and deficits in social cognition—may all be traced to brain malfunctions of one sort or another. But would finding the neural correlates of violence-related traits help us determine criminal responsibility for bad behavior? Suppose we can outline a genuine connection between a brain disorder and violent tendencies. Do we thereby have some reason to assign diminished responsibility to offenders with this type of disorder? If we could demonstrate neurobiologically that, for example, psychopaths’ behavior is motivated in ways that differ substantially from the rest of us, would this make psychopaths “mad” or “bad”? I attempt to answer these questions in this presentation.

“Passive and Active Ignorance”

Kate Johnson, Bellarmine University

This paper explores the moral dimensions of ignorance and its excusing force. The occurrence of ignorance and its impact on moral action is far-reaching and pervasive. Ignorance not only impairs us, it also promotes an environment of uncertainty. If ignorance truly is an excusing condition for moral accountability and culpability (acknowledged by most moral theories and implicit in ‘ought implies can’), this necessitates a deeper exploration of the reasons for its excusing force. My goal in this paper is to investigate four competing accounts that distinguish between culpable and non-culpable ignorance. In so doing, I introduce an alternative distinction between these types of ignorance – namely, passive and active ignorance.

“Overcoming Student Aversion to Obligations”

Court Lewis, Owensboro Community and Technical College

The paper examines how students perceive and react to the concept of moral obligations. I present four explanations for how students generally understand obligations, and I provide a variety of methods for how instructors might engage students who are averse to them. The four explanations I focus on are class structure, student relativism, student fears/misunderstandings, and the phenomenon of students fetishizing liberty. My goal is to create an effective way for instructors to engage and enlighten students, in regards to obligations, autonomy, or other features of morality.

“Why Patience Is Always a Virtue

Matthew Pianalto, Eastern Kentucky University

It is sometimes suggested that traits commonly regarded as virtues are not in every instance virtuous. On such views, these traits are not univocally good: one might possess too much courage or too much patience. Such talk has a natural feel—“be patient, but not too patient!” but it conflicts with traditional ways of thinking about the virtues. In this paper, focusing on the case of patience, I illustrate a way of resolving this conflict that accords with the spirit of the traditional approach—in particular with the thought that the virtuous traits are themselves always good. That means, for example, that patience is always a virtue, and that one cannot be “too patient,” even though those claims seem to conflict with other rather ordinary ways of thinking and talking about patience. The approach illustrated herein can also be applied to similar conflicts and disputes about other virtues.

“A New Analysis of Mercy”

Kristofer Rhodes, Martin University

Unsurprisingly, analyses of mercy in the contemporary literature are divided on certain cases. More surprisingly, on another kind of case, they are united in giving the wrong answer. I offer a new analysis which gives the right answer to both kinds of cases. I also use this analysis to develop an explanation as to why intuitions about mercy in difficult cases often differ from thinker to thinker.

“Are Character Intellectual Virtues ‘Reliabilist Virtues’?”

Marlin R. Sommers, University of Tennessee at Knoxville

I consider an argument, by Jason Baehr, that reliabilist accounts of warranted true belief need to include intellectual character virtues like inquisitiveness and fair-mindedness within their inventory of reliable knowledge-makers alongside of faculty virtues like excellent eyesight and good memory. I challenge Baehr’s claim that virtue reliabilist accounts of warranted true belief in propositions should include character intellectual virtues. I argue that, though warranted true belief in propositions often does depend on character intellectual virtues, the kind of connection involved is not the kind relevant to reliabilist accounts of knowledge. I supplement and support the claim with two observations. Notably, the cases used to illustrate the importance of character intellectual virtues are not cases where true belief falls short of knowledge because it was non-virtuously attained. Further, character vices, including arguably intellectual character vices, can manifest the same kind of connection to knowledge as character virtues do.

Registration & Accommodations

Registration: \$20 for regular attendees (including presenters); \$10 for graduate students (including presenters); undergraduates may attend for free.

Accommodations: The official hotel for the conference is The Staybridge Suites, 680 Campbell Rd, Bowling Green, KY 42104. The phone number is 877-238-8889. Be sure to tell them that you are with the WKU Kentucky Philosophical Association Conference. We have a secure room rate for \$79.99 a night. That is good for both Friday and Saturday nights. The hotel has a shuttle that can drop you off at our door on campus and pick you up so long as you tell the front desk beforehand.

Contact: Audrey L. Anton, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Western Kentucky University, 1906 College Heights Blvd. Bowling Green, KY 42104, 270-745-5757, audrey.anton@wku.edu